

# BULLETIN

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GILES COREY & GOODWYFE COREY.

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### A BALLAD OF 1692.\*

COME all New England Men,  
And hearken unto me,  
And I will tell what did befall  
Upon ye Gallows Tree.

In Salem Village was the place,  
As I did heare them saye,  
And Goodwyfe Corey was her name  
Upon that paynfull daye:

This Goody Corey was a Witch  
The people did believe,  
Afflicting of the Godly ones  
Did make them sadlie Greave.

There were two pyous Matron Dames,  
And goodly Maidens Three,

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\*This ballad was "handed in for preservation" to the *Salem Observer*, and appeared in the issue of April 13, 1850. It has since been extensively copied in other publications, and is inserted here as appropriate in connection with the subject of debate at the Field Meeting at West Peabody. The perfect correspondence with the style of that period has caused it to be considered a veritable production of the Witchcraft times; and a copy of it which appeared some years since in a western paper, was headed "An amusing relic of Puritanism, written during the Witchcraft Mania in Salem." It was written by Fitch Poole, Esq., of Peabody.

—EDITORS.

That cryed upon this heynous witch,  
As you shall quicklie see.

Goodwyfe Bibber she was one,  
And Goodwyfe Goodall two,  
These were ye sore afflicted ones  
By Fyts and Pynchings too :

And those Three Damsels fair,  
She worried them full sore,  
As all could see upon their Arms  
The divers Marks they bore.

And when before the Magistrates  
For tryall she did stand,  
This Wicked Witch did lye to them  
While holding up her hand :

"I pray you all Good Gentlemen  
Come listen unto me,  
I never harmed those two Goodwyfes  
Nor yet these Children Three :"

"I call upon my Saviour Lord,"  
(Blasphemously she sayd)

"As Witness of my Innocence  
In this my hour of need."

The Godly Ministers were shockt  
This Witch-prayer for to heare,  
And soone did see ye Black Man\* there  
A whispering in her eare.

The Magistrates did saye to her  
"Most surely thou doth lye,  
Confess thou here thy hellish deeds  
Or ill death thou must dye."

She rent her Cloaths, she tore her Haire,  
And lowdly she did crye,  
"May Christe forgive mine Enimies  
When I am called to die."

This Goodwyfe had a Goodman too,  
Giles Corey was his name,  
In Salem Gaol they shut him in  
With his blasphemous Dame.

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\* Satan.

Giles Corey was a Wizzard strong,  
A stubborn wretch was he,  
And fitt was he to hang on high  
Upon ye Locust Tree :

So when before ye Magistrates  
For tryall he did come,  
He would no true confession make  
But was compleatly dumbe.

“Giles Corey,” said ye magistrate,  
“What hast thou hear to pleade  
To these who now accuse thy soule  
Of crymes and horrid deed.”

Giles Corey — he sayde not a Word.  
No single Word spake he :  
“Giles Corey” sayth ye Magistrate,  
“We'll press it out of thee.”

They got them then a good wide Board,  
They layde it on his Breast,  
They loaded it with heavy Stones,  
And hard upon him prest.

“More weight,” now sayd this wretched man,  
“More weight,” again he cryed,  
And he did no Confession make,  
But wickedly he dyed.

Dame Corey lived but six dayes more,  
But six dayes more lived she,  
For She was hung at Gallows Hill  
Upon ye Locust Tree.

Rejoice all true New-England Men,  
Let Grace still more abounde,  
Go search ye Land with myght and main,  
Till all these Imps be founde :

And that will be a glorious Daye,  
A goodlie Sight to see,  
When you shall hang these Brands of fyre  
Upon ye Gallows Tree.



FIELD MEETING AT SWAMPSCOTT, WEDNESDAY,  
JULY 20, 1870.

[Continued from page 112.]

THE appropriation of the force (radiated in the form of heat, magnetism and electricity from a contracting globe, formerly in a state of general fusion) by matter on the surface, and under the guidance of an intelligent and creative Providence, would end in the vast accumulation of organic forms deposited in times past, in the countless strata of the planet's crust. Mechanical force was absolutely necessary to the production, growth, and multiplication of all organisms, whether plant or animals. On present theories all heat is, and has been, radiated into space. This has been going on for infinite cycles, from all cosmical masses, and still the cold of space is intense. The lowest estimate makes it more than  $150^{\circ}$  below zero. Dr. Winslow thought the Providence of the universal mind could not permit such waste of the very force which is so necessary for the creation of the organic objects that cover the land and fill the seas of the globe.

This was the working power of nature, and must be *conserved* and never exhausted nor wasted. Space, in accordance with his investigations and reasonings, was a vacuum and not a plenum. All force radiated from the surface of the globe was employed in the work going on incessantly in the surface molecules, in order to embellish the planet and perpetuate the fluctuating changes which occur upon it. He hoped the investigations of others would be directed toward this subject, which to naturalists, in an especial manner, was of the highest importance, as destined to throw light on many phenomena heretofore obscure.

MR. HYATT, who had been referred to as an advocate of the theory of upheaval, said he did not know that Dr. Winslow's process of reasoning was not quite as satisfactory as that of those who advance the opposite view, and though he was rather inclined to the latter, he had in his explanations simply explained a theory that was generally accepted by geologists as a correct one. Other questions incidental to the topics, were raised, which caused Mr. Hewes to suggest that the orators appeared to differ in geology as well as in theology.

MR. S. B. BUTTRICK of Salem, presented a list of twenty-four species of native plants, which he had found in flower during the forenoon's excursion.

MR. W. P. UPHAM of Salem, was next called upon to give some facts in reference to the history of the town. He stated that what is now Swampscott, was originally a grant to John Humphrey, in 1635. In 1641 it was sold by him to Lady Deborah Moody, and occupied by her

until her removal to Long Island a few years afterwards. It was then leased to Daniel King, who, in 1651, took a conveyance of the farm, which consisted of twelve hundred acres, with the buildings. Mr. Upham read a copy of a letter from the agent of Lady Moody to Mr. King, in 1649-50, relating to the purchase of the farm then known as Swampscott—the original still being preserved among the old papers in the Court House. In this letter was given a list of articles which Lady Moody wished Mr. King to send to her in part payment for the farm. This list was valuable, as showing the needs of the time, in the way of household furniture and farm utensils, etc.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Selectmen of Swampscott, for the use of this hall; to Mr. E. R. Mudge, and other citizens, for kind attentions.

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#### ADJOURNED MEETING, FRIDAY, JULY 22, 1870.

John D. Eaton, Edward C. Cheever, William P. Andrews, J. Lyman Silsbee, all of Salem, were duly elected members.

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#### FIELD MEETING AT WEST PEABODY, THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 1870.

THE meeting was held at the spacious hall in the new school-house; thither the excursionists wended their way on alighting from the cars at the station near the crossing of the Salem and Lowell, and the Danvers and Georgetown Railroads, under the guidance of several of the leading citizens who were in attendance, and who extended to them a cordial welcome. After depositing their baskets the company divided into parties in search of objects for the gratification of special tastes. Some were interested in the historical associations connected with this spot, which is on the original farm of Giles Corey, who was pressed to death, and whose wife was executed in the witchcraft prosecutions in 1692; his house was situated about one hundred yards from the station, on land now owned by Benjamin Taylor. The community in this vicinity are firmly fixed on their paternal acres, many of the estates having come down to their present owners through a lineal descent of six generations. Some of the residences are very ancient; one built about two hundred and thirty years ago was visited by many who were heartily welcomed by the present proprietor. In this school district, comprising an area of some three square miles, there are one hundred and sixteen voters, and this number has not materially changed during the past one hundred years. The old cus-



tom of burying their dead on their own premises here prevails, and within these three square miles are twenty-three burial places.

The magnificent flora attracted several to the edges of the woods and ponds, and numerous beautiful specimens were collected. The animal kingdom also furnished some rare contributions to the findings of the day. Many ascended an elevated point of land and enjoyed a widely extended view of the surrounding country and the ocean in the distance. Some visited the Winona Mills, and were interested in examining the different varieties of cassimeres, ladies' cloth, etc., there manufactured, and inspecting the various processes through which the material passes, from the bale to the beautiful cloth. The mills are owned by Messrs. Train & Pollock, who employ about seventy-five operatives. The motive power is an overshot wheel of about forty horse power. At 1.30 P. M. the company re-assembled at the school house, which is a fine building, eligibly situated, with two large school rooms on the first floor, one department under the charge of a male principal and the other of a female assistant; and in the second story is a commodious hall, used not only for school purposes but also as a lecture and concert room for the neighborhood, and for religious services on the Sabbath. Here the collation was partaken and at 3 o'clock the meeting for the reports and speaking was called to order by the President, who requested Mr. James H. Emerton to act as Secretary, in the absence of that officer.

The records of the preceding meeting were read.

The following correspondence was announced:—

Robert Brown, Jr., Cincinnati, July 22; J. C. Holmes, Detroit, July 30; A. H. Johnson, Bradford, Aug. 2; Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Dec. 28, 1869; Nassuasischen Verein für Naturkunde, Wiesbaden, Dec. 1, 1869; A. J. Phipps, Boston, Aug. 2; G. H. Preble, San Francisco, Cal., July 18; Royal Physico-Economical Society at Königsburg, 9, 4, 1870; C. M. Tracy, Lynn, July 30; C. A. Walker, Chelsea, July 20.

The LIBRARIAN reported the following additions to the library:

*By Donations.*

ANDREWS, EDMUND, of Chicago, Ill. The North America Lakes, considered as Chronometers of Post Glacial Time, 8vo pamph., Chicago, 1870.

BRONSON LIBRARY, of Waterbury, Conn. First Annual Report, 1870.

CHASE, Miss MARIA, Chinese Repository, 52 numbers. White's Eulogy on Bowditch, 8vo pamph.

CONGRESS LIBRARY, Washington, D. C. Catalogue of Books added in 1869, 1 vol. 4to, Washington, 1870.

COOK, WM. S. Massachusetts Business Directory for 1856. Business Directory of the Principal Southern Cities, 1856-7.

HOLMES, J. C., of Detroit, Mich. Hand Book and Guide Map of the City of Detroit, 1870.

LEA, ISAAC, of Philadelphia, Pa. A Synopsis of the Family Unionidæ, 1 vol. 4to.

LEE, FRANCIS H. Westminster Review, 18 numbers. Edinburgh Review, 17 numbers. London Quarterly Review, 19 numbers.

LEE, JOHN C. Commercial Bulletin for July.

MANNING, ROBERT. Boston Directory, 1869, 1 vol. 8vo.

RANTOUL, R. S. Miscellaneous pamphlets 150, and 38 volumes.

ROPES, Rev. WM. L. Triennial Catalogue of the Theological Seminary, Andover, 1870.

STICKNEY, M. A. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 6.

WATERS, J. LINTON, of Chicago, Ill. Third Annual Report of the Brainerd Free Dispensary of Chicago for 1870, 8vo pamph. Edward's Chicago Directory, 1 vol. 8vo, Chicago, 1869.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, Worcester. Annual Report, 1870.

### *By Exchange.*

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY. Proceedings at Annual Meeting, April 27, 1870.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY. Eighteenth Annual Report, 1870.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE. Catalogus Collegii Bowdoinensis, 1870, 8vo pamph.

KÖNIGLICHE PHYSIKALISCH-OEKONOMISCHE GESELLSCHAFT ZU KÖNIGSBERG. Schriften 1867, 1868, 4to pamphlets.

NATURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE GESELLSCHAFT ISIS, in Dresden. Sitzungs-Berichte, von Carl Bley, Jahrg., 1870, 8vo pamph.

NATURHISTORISCHE VEREIN DER PREUSSISCHEN RHEINLANDE UND WEST-PHALENS. Verhandlungen des Herausgegeben von Dr. C. J. Andrä. Bogen 1-14, 2 pamphlets, 8vo, Bonn, 1869.

PUBLISHERS. Book Buyer. Christian World. Cosmos. Eclectic. Essex Banner. Gloucester Telegraph. Haverhill Gazette. Historical Magazine. Land and Water. Lawrence American. Literary World. Little Giant. Lynn Reporter. Medical and Surgical Reporter. Nation. Nature. Pavilion. Peabody Press. Semi-Monthly Visitor.

ROYAL SOCIETY, of London. Proceedings, Vol. xvii, No. 110-113, Vol. xviii, 114-118, 1869.

VEREIN FÜR NATURKUNDE WIESBADEN. Jahrbücher des, Jahrg., 21 and 22, 1867-8.

YALE COLLEGE. Statements of Yale College in 1870, 8vo pamph. Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College, 1870. Supplement to the Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College, 1860.

### The SUPERINTENDENT announced the following donations:—

FRANK BUTLER, of Salem. Pectens from the Grand Banks, and Ducks' Eggs.

ROBERT BROOKHOUSE. An Albino Sand Martin from Rowley.

WILLIAM GARDNER of Salem. Eggs of the Canary Bird.

JOSHUA P. HASKELL of Marblehead. A large collection of Insects of Essex County.

JAMES KIMBALL of Salem. Several Insects from Florida.

ANNIE LANGDELL of Salem. Specimen of Dragon Fly (Aeschnaheros).

Mr. LEWIS of Salem. Specimen of Brown Bat.

ROBERT MANNING of Salem. Specimens of Black Walnuts grown in Salem.

J. A. PAINE of Salem. Specimen of Tomato Worm (Sphinx quinquemaculatus).

JOSEPH STICKNEY of Salem. Partial Skeleton of the Skate.

SAMUEL WALKER of Salem. Smooth-back flounder.



The PRESIDENT requested Mr. A. C. GOODELL, jr., to take the chair, who, with a few words of introduction, in which he alluded to some of the historical associations of the place, and to the fact that this was the first time that a field meeting had been held in this immediate locality, proceeded to introduce the several speakers.

GEORGE D. PHIPPEN spoke at some length on the importance of the study of Botany and the use of plants in the great economy of nature. He then gave particular accounts of many of the plants collected during the forenoon's excursions, of which there were a goodly number, both in quantity and variety. Among those which he specified, may be enumerated *Lobelia cardinalis*, the beautiful cardinal flower, which with its varieties may be easily transplanted into our gardens, and become one of the most attractive flowers in the *parterre*; the several species of *Spiræa*, the *Orchis*, *Eupatorium*, *Gerardia*, *Rhexia*, and others. A specimen of the common teasel used by woollen manufacturers was presented, and the question was raised as to the feasibility of its cultivation in this vicinity. Those used at Winona Mills were brought from a distance. It was stated that Richard Crowninshield, Esq., many years ago raised it in considerable quantities in this town, and supplied several mills.

Mr. JAMES H. EMERTON, of Salem, showed some very beautiful and varied specimens of galls, upon the leaves of the Walnut tree, and explained the habits of the insect which produces them. He depicted upon the blackboard some of the forms of the architecture of the webs of several species of spiders, as that of the *Agelena naevia* and *Epeira riparia*, and in reply to some queries he described their mandibles and the manner of biting. The bite, he said, was poisonous, but they seldom or never poisoned anybody, for the reason that they have no jaws of sufficient power to puncture the human skin; he had handled all sorts of spiders for years, with perfect freedom, and was never bitten.

Prof. E. S. MORSE spoke of the common grasshoppers, and explained wherein their growth differed from that of other insects which undergo a thorough metamorphosis; and why they are plenty in dry, and scarce in wet seasons. The eggs are deposited in the ground. In dry weather they all hatch, while continued moisture is fatal to them. He concluded with some general remarks in advocacy of a better knowledge of the rudiments of natural history, alluding to popular errors currently entertained, and which creep into the newspapers with a singular ignorance of the facts. The poisonous nature of spiders and snakes then became a topic of debate, participated in by Messrs. Morse, Emerton, Bancroft, Cooke, Spofford, and others.

At this time the intense lightning and loud peals of thunder, accompanying a very heavy shower which had suddenly come up, inter-



ferred somewhat with the proceedings of the meeting. In a few moments, however, quiet was restored, and the Chairman, after giving some account of the church founded here in 1672, called upon Mr. W. P. Upham for information as to the history of Giles Corey, upon whose homestead this meeting was held.

Mr. UPHAM stated that though he feared he should not be able to present much that would be specially interesting, the principal facts in the history of Giles Corey being probably well known to all present, yet, as he had some years ago carefully studied the history of this region for the purpose of ascertaining the true site of Corey's dwelling house, he might be able to give some information on this point. In strolling over these fields and pastures to-day he had found pleasure not only from the contemplation of the quiet and peaceful scenery of hill and dale, and the alternate views of forest and clearing, so charming to the eye, but from the associations that cluster round the place. Names are called to mind of men who lived here long ago, men of strong character, pioneers in the civilization of that day. To them these scenes were rendered familiar and dear through long years of toil and honorable endurance.

Our place of meeting to-day is at the very centre of what was once the homestead farm of Giles Corey, one of the martyrs of the Witchcraft Delusion of 1692. His first home in Salem was in a house which was situated near the Town Bridge, as it was called, a little to the northwest of the corner of Boston and Federal streets. There are indications that the western part of the town was first settled by a class of persons specially inclined to differ in religious affairs from those having the control of the church; possibly this may have first taken place under the leadership of Roger Williams, who lived, in 1635, in the house now standing on the west corner of Essex and North streets. However this may be, investigations recently made, show that among the families living during the earliest years between North street and the Town Bridge, were those of Verren, Phelps, Trusler, Kitchen, Cotta, Reeves, Morey, Pease, Shattuck, Gardner, Needham, Byshop, Moulton, Buffum, Alderman, Flint and Southwick; all of them more or less conspicuous as conscientious opponents of some of the religious doctrines of their time, and some of them well known in history as fearless defenders of their own peculiar faith. Giles Corey's nearest neighbor, before he removed to this farm, was Lawrence Southwick, whose daughter has been immortalized by Whittier for her heroic exhibition of that same spirit of unyielding devotion which afterwards cost poor Giles Corey his life.

In 1660 Corey purchased of Robert Goodell, fifty acres of land, which had been originally granted to Edward Giles, and also about sixty acres more of the heirs of John Alderman. In the fall of the prece-

ding year he had made a contract by which John Norton was to build him a house "twenty foot in length, fifteene in breadth and eight foot stud;" and here he lived from that time till his death in 1692. This farm extended on both sides of the road which passes in front of this school-house where we hold our meeting. Corey gave it to his sons-in-law, Wm. Cleeves and John Moulton, who divided it between them. Cleeves conveyed his share, which was on the west side of the road, to Nathaniel Hayward, who, in 1702, conveyed the northern part of it to Wm. Curtice. This is still known as "the Curtice field," and the old well and house-place, just north of the school house, marks the spot where Curtice lived. That part of the farm on the east side of the road was conveyed by John Moulton to Humphrey French, in 1695, together with the house in which Giles Corey had lived. French's heirs conveyed it to Nathaniel Gould, and from him it descended to John Clammons, who, in 1773, conveyed it to Andrew Curtice, who conveyed it to Jacob Goodale. In 1792 it was conveyed to Samuel Taylor, who, in 1847, gave it to his son Benjamin Taylor, who now owns it.

The spot where Corey's house stood is on the south side of the Salem and Lowell Railroad, about twenty rods west of the West Peabody Junction. All traces of it were removed a few years ago, but the site is identified both by the record history and by tradition.

The deed by which Giles Corey passed this farm over to his sons-in-law, Cleeves and Moulton, was probably first drawn up and signed in the jail at Salem, where he was confined under the accusation of witchcraft, as it is dated April 24, 1692, and one of the three witnesses to the deed, which also had the character of a will, was Wm. Doughton, keeper of the prison at Salem. It was finally executed at the jail at Ipswich, being acknowledged there July 25, 1692, before "Thomas Wade, Justice of the Peace." The property is described as follows, "all my land and meadow lying and being in ye bounds of Salem town," and "all my neat cattle and all other my stock upon the said farm or elsewhere, as likewise all my houseing." He speaks of himself as "lying under great trouble and affliction through which I am very weak in body but in perfect memory, knowing not how soon I may depart this life."

It is not unlikely that Giles Corey had already made up his mind to that determination to which he afterwards so firmly adhered, to refuse to plead either "guilty," or "not guilty," to the indictment for witchcraft, which had been brought against him. According to the ancient theory of English law, it was necessary that a person accused of a capital felony should voluntarily "put himself upon the country," by pleading to the indictment, before a trial could be had; probably this was required in order to give a kind of sanction to the subse-

quent conviction and execution. Where the accused party refused to plead, he was placed in close confinement (*en la prison fort et dure*) with hardly any sustenance there to be kept "till he answered," "as those who refuse to be at the common law of the land." Afterwards the practice of pressing to death by loading with heavy weights, was introduced as a sort of mercy to the prisoner, shortening the duration of his torture. As no conviction or judgment could be had in such a case, the forfeiture of property, which would result from a conviction of a capital felony, was avoided; and numerous cases have occurred in England where the forfeiture of estates has been thus prevented. It was generally supposed, during the witchcraft trials of 1692, that confiscation would follow conviction, and this would probably have been the case had the delusion maintained its sway long enough for such a principle to take effect.

We may therefore believe that Giles Corey in enduring the protracted torture of being pressed to death, was actuated not by mere obstinacy, which would be wholly unaccountable and incredible, but by the determination to save his property from forfeiture, that it might be enjoyed after his death by his faithful sons-in-law, who alone had befriended him in this great emergency, while others of his family had deserted him.

The generous magnanimity and sentiment of gratitude which could prompt such a design, and the indomitable will and energy of purpose which could enable him to pass, unshrinking, through the terrible ordeal which a cruel and barbarous law required, excites our admiration and renders him worthy of being classed with those martyrs of history who have died in a cause which seemed good to them.

Mr. Upham then referred to Mr. William F. Poole, who was present, and who, he believed, could give some information as to the means taken to induce Gyles Corey to change his determination not to plead to the indictment for witchcraft.

Dr. JEREMIAH SPOFFORD of Goveland, spoke of some deeds of meadow land near here by Giles Corey, which had formerly been in his possession, but had been lost. He also said that fifty years ago he had heard a fork of the roads near by, spoken of as the place where Corey was buried.

Mr. WILLIAM F. POOLE was then called upon by the chairman, with some complimentary remarks on his historical writings, and an allusion to his article on "Cotton Mather and Salem Witchcraft," in the North American Review for April, 1869, as containing views which were different from those generally accepted in this community.

Mr. Poole remarked that though born and reared in what was then Salem, but since Danvers, South Danvers, and Peabody, and having been specially interested in the subject of witchcraft, he had never be-



fore visited this spot. In reply to the question propounded, he stated that measures were taken to cause Giles Corey to relent and plead. By the courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society he had recently the privilege of examining the manuscript Diary of Judge Sewall, who was a member of the court that tried the alleged witches. Judge Sewall made an entry on the 19th of September, 1692, stating that this day, about noon, Giles Corey was pressed to death at Salem for standing mute, or refusing to plead "guilty," or "not guilty." The Judge further states that much pains was used with him for two days by the court, one after another, and Capt. Richard Gardner of Nantucket, who had been his acquaintance, but all in vain.

No other instance of the infliction of this dreadful penalty has ever occurred in New England. Why did it occur in this case! No law permitting such a barbarity was ever on a New England statute book. There was no New England law in force at the time, by which witchcraft or any other capital crime could be punished. The government of Massachusetts Bay was in a transition state. The old charter of the colony had been taken away by the British Crown. For nearly six years the colony had been under the despotic rule of Sir Edmund Andros, or a temporary "council for the safety of the people." It was understood that the repeal of the charter vacated the laws enacted under it. The witchcraft excitement at Salem Village broke out in February, 1691-2, and when Sir Wm. Phips, appointed Governor under the new charter, arrived in Boston in May, 1692, the jails of Salem, Ipswich and Boston, were filled with persons committed for the crime of witchcraft, and awaiting trial. Many of them were the heads of families; their farm work was neglected, and, according to the custom of that period they were obliged to pay their own jail fees and expenses.

Gov. Phips arrived on Saturday, the 14th of May. On Monday the 16th, the government was organized. The council sat from day to day, and proceeded as rapidly as possible to appoint justices, sheriffs, coroners, and other officers for the several counties. On the 27th of May a special court was appointed for the trial of persons under arrest "for all manner of crimes and offences had, made, done or perpetrated within the counties of Suffolk, Essex, and Middlesex." Nothing was said in the commission about witchcraft. Under what law should the court act? There were no laws in force for the punishment of crime. The commission states under what law they were to act. They were instructed "to enquire of, hear and determine, for this time, according to the law and custom of England, and of this their Majesty's Province." As there were no Province laws, the latter clause of the sentence had then no meaning. A Province code, for the punishment of capital crimes, was not passed till October 29. The

judges therefore went into the trials for witchcraft under the English statute of James I. Giles Corey was not tried for witchcraft, but he came to his horrid death under the provisions of another English statute, for refusing to plead. It was English, and not New England barbarity which inflicted this dread penalty. Those judges were not inhuman men. The diary of Judge Sewall shows that they tried to save him from this ordeal. We know the personal character of these judges in other relations. They were under a delusion as to the phenomena and theory of witchcraft; but they were conscientious and honest men, and represented the temper and spirit of their times. Gov. Hutchinson, in an unpublished manuscript which I have recently found, says he cannot understand why they did not burn their witches, as was done in England, and as the statute, under which they acted, required. The public sentiment of that period was not shocked, at the time, by the penalties inflicted by the Court. Chief Justice Stoughton, who was the controlling mind in these transactions, received every vote for the same position when the Superior Court was regularly organized, on the 7th of December following. His associates, Richards, Winthrop, and Sewall, who also sat with him in the witch trials, were also reëlected, together with Danforth, but only by a majority vote. Their contestants were Hathorne and Gedney, who were as deeply implicated in the witch trials as they.

But the special court itself, we are told, was an illegal body, and this is, technically speaking, a correct statement. The new charter did not give the Governor and Council authority to appoint a special court to try criminal cases. That power was vested in the General Court which was to convene on the 8th of June. Why not postpone the organization of the courts till after the General Court had met. This would have been the regular, and hence the better proceeding. The preamble of the judges commission gives reasons, and reads thus: "Upon consideration that there are many criminal offenders now in custody, some whereof have lain long, and many inconveniences attending the thronging of the jails at this hot season of the year, there being no judicatories or courts yet established; ordered," &c. These reasons, though technically insufficient, may on the score of humanity, have had more weight on the minds of the Governor and Council, than they have on ours to-day. The 27th of May the hot season of the year! we must consider that the calendar has been changed, and that the 27th of May, old style, is the same as the 6th of June in our calendar. Shut up in close, inconvenient and crowded prisons, and conscious of their own innocence, the wretched prisoners doubtless clamored for a speedy trial; and it was charity to grant them this boon. The organization of the special court, and the appointees named in the commission, met with general approval. Not a

complaint was uttered, and not a breath of suspicion can be found in any contemporary writing against the character or personal integrity of any member of the court, and yet their course during the trials was severely criticised and condemned. The General Court acquiesced in the early action of the Governor and Council, and for nearly six months took no measures to organize a regular court of judicature. It hardly becomes us to lay too much stress on the irregularity pertaining to the organization of the special court, when there is so much to condemn in the blind and illegal proceedings at the trial. In this, again, the judges followed English precedents, the opinion of Sir Matthew Hale, and of English lawyers, rather than the advice of the leading clergymen of Boston and the vicinity. But time will not suffice to discuss this point.

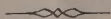
My friend Mr. Upham, has said but little of the life and personal character of Giles Corey, while he has indulged in terms of eulogy which befit only a noble character. I have made no special study of Giles Corey's life, and hence the little I know of him is that common information which is open to you all. My impression is that, though an exemplary citizen and a church member in his latter days, he bore through life the reputation of anything but a saint. He had the misfortune to be continually in quarrels and disputes with his neighbors. He was a rash and impetuous man. He was once on trial for his life, for killing one of his farm laborers named Goodell; and though acquitted of that charge he was fined for cruelly beating the man. He was accused of stealing wood, of setting John Proctor's house on fire, and whatever mischief happened in the neighborhood it was thought safe to charge it upon Giles Corey. His rash nature may have brought him under suspicion when he was innocent. He sometimes turned upon his accusers, prosecuted them for slander, and recovered damages. On the whole he must have lived a disturbed and troubled life, and where there was so much smoke it is safe to conclude there was some fire. When the witchcraft troubles broke out he was eighty-one years of age. He believed in punishing witchcraft, attended the trials, and entered into the spirit of the prosecutions. When his wife was accused he hedged, and became himself involved. He was examined by the local magistrates, April 19, and committed to jail. At this examination he answered all questions, and manifested none of that resolute silence which five months later cost him his life. There was a rugged heroism in his manner of meeting death, which is picturesque; but it fails to inspire in me that respect which I feel for the calm faith and resignation of Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse. I will not detain you further by incidents in his life, which must be familiar to you all.

Mr. S. C. BANCROFT, thought that what Mr. Poole had said gave a



different view of the character of Giles Corey, and made it appear that Mr. Upham's suggestion as to the motives which actuated him in refusing to plead could not be the true one. If Corey brought his misfortunes upon himself why should he deserve sympathy or respect? He believed that some had thought of erecting a monument to the memory of Giles Corey, but for his part he would not contribute to such a monument to one who had obstinately defied the laws. He was inclined to think that Corey died a fool's death.

Mr. UPHAM replied to this at some length, defending Corey as one possessing many good traits, although he had not intended to claim for him a perfect character in all respects. His eccentricities made him often during his life the object of slander, but no serious charge was brought against him which was not disproved. When he was accused of setting John Proctor's house on fire he was proved to be innocent beyond question, and was acquitted. The fact of his owning and carrying on successfully for more than fifty years, so large and valuable a farm as this, is greatly to his credit. But besides this his having been admitted to full membership in the old church at Salem when eighty years of age, and from that time at least, leading a wholly blameless and religious life, should relieve his character from the reproach of any former defects that may have existed. It seems very strange that here, in this enlightened age, and on the very spot where this victim of a terrible delusion had lived for so many years, the same calumnies that were made use of at the time by those in power, to shield themselves against the odium which even then attached to this cruel proceeding, should be again brought up to blacken his character. As to the monument to his memory, Mr. Upham said that he had not known that it had been proposed, but he was rejoiced to think that here on the very homestead of Giles Corey, the victim of the barbarism and superstitions of a past age, had arisen a most appropriate monument, the best that could be erected—a beautiful school house where the mind shall be educated, and an influence be spread abroad by which men shall be raised above the errors and delusions of ignorance, and freed from the darkness of superstitious beliefs.



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 1870.

A quarterly meeting was held at the rooms this day at 3 P. M.

The President in the chair. Records of preceding meeting read.

The proposed amendment to the Constitution, reported at the annual meeting, had its second reading.

Thomas Flint of Peabody, Francis H. Appleton of Peabody, and David Pingree of Salem, were elected Resident Members.

### DEFICIENCIES IN THE LIBRARY.

It is intended, from time to time, to publish lists of deficiencies in the Library, hoping that the friends of the Institute who may notice the same, will be induced to aid in completing the sets. Any number or volume, not designated (within brackets) under any title, will be acceptable.

### DEFICIENCIES IN DIRECTORIES.

*[Continued from page 15.]*

PROVIDENCE, by H. H. Brown [1838-9, 1841-2, 1844-5, 1847-8, 1850-1, 1852-3, 1853-4, 1855-6, 1856-7, 1857-8]; by Adams, Sampson & Co. [1861, 1862, 1863, 1865]; by Sampson, Davenport & Co. [1866, 1867]; by W. F. Bartlett [1859-60].

BRIDGEPORT, by Andrew Boyd [1865-6].

HARTFORD, by Melzar Gardner [1838, 1839, 1840, 1841]; by Y. N. Bolles [1842, 1844, 1845]; by Elihu Geer [1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852-3, 1853-4, 1854-5, 1855-6, 1856-7, 1857-8, 1858-9, 1859-60, 1860-1, 1861-2, 1862-3, 1863-4, 1864-5, 1865-6, 1867-8].

NEW HAVEN, by James M. Patten [1845-6]; by J. H. Benham [1848-9, 1850-1, 1851-2, 1852-3, 1853-4, 1854-5, 1855-6, 1856-7, 1857-8, 1858-9, 1859-60, 1860-1, 1861-2, 1862-3, 1863-4, 1864-5, 1866-7, 1867-8, 1869-70].

NEW LONDON, by Starr & Co [1855-6].

NORWICH, by W. H. Boyd [1857, 1860]; by John W. Stedman [1865].

ALBANY, by Wm. Cummeier, Jr. [1829-30]; by Edmund B. Child [1832-3, 1833-4, 1834-5, 1835-6]; by L. G. Hoffman [1837-8, 1838-9, 1839-40, 1840-1, 1841-2, 1842-3, 1843-4, 1844-5, 1845-6, 1846-7, 1847-8, 1848-9, 1849-50, 1850-1]; by Hoffman & Munsell [1851-2]; by J. Munsell [1852-3, 1853-4, 1854, 1855, 1856]; by George Adams [1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863].

AUBURN, by W. H. Boyd [1859-60].

BINGHAMPTON, by W. H. Boyd [1859-60]; by A. Boyd [1869-70].

BOONVILLE, by J. C. Kimball [1868].

BROOKLYN, by Henry L. Ogden [1839-40]; by H. R. & W. J. Hearne [1848-9, 1849-50, 1850-1, 1851-2, 1852-3]; by W. H. Smith [1854-5, 1855-6, 1856-7]; by Hope & Henderson [1856-7]; by J. Lain [1857-8, 1858-9, 1859-60, 1860-1, 1861-2, 1862-3, 1863-4]; by W. H. Boyd [1860].

BUFFALO, by L. P. Crary [1828, 1832, 1835, 1837, 1838]; by Faxon & Graves [1839, 1840, 1841]; by Horatio N. Walker [1842, 1844]; by Thomas S. Cutting [1848-9]; by Jewett, Thomas & Co. [1850-1, 1851-2, 1852, 1853, 1854]; by Thomas Lathrop [1855, 1856]; by E. R. Jewett [1857, 1858, 1859, 1860]; by R. Wheeler & Co. [1861]; by C. F. S. Thomas [1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868].